

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
ACDA-12 /078 W
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R 121724Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0361
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 07540

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, GW, UR
SUBJECT: BREZHNEV VISIT TO BONN

SUMMARY: PLANNING FOR BREZHNEV'S TRIP APPEARS TO BE MOVING
ALONG. AS A WHOLE, THE SOVIET PRESS HAS STOPPED THE
CRITICAL ARTICLES ON THE FRG, BUT IS SOMEWHAT SLOW IN
GENERATING POSITIVE PIECES. END SUMMARY.

1. ACCORDING TO FRG AMBASSADOR THE PLANNING FOR BREZHNEV'S
TRIP TO BONN IS PROCEEDING WELL ALTHOUGH DETAILS REMAIN
ONLY TENTATIVE. HE IS SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE IN BONN ON
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MAY 4 AT 11:00 A.M. BY AIR FROM MOSCOW. AFTER TWO DAYS
IN THE CAPITAL HE WILL FLY TO SCHMIDT'S HOME TOWN OF
HAMBURG AND THEN FLY DIRECTLY ON TO MOSCOW FROM HAMBURG
ON MAY 7. WHILE IN BONN HE WILL HAVE TWO MEETINGS
WITH SCHMIDT AND ONE WITH SCHEEL, THE LATTER PRESUMABLY
PROTOCOLARY. ADDITIONALLY, MEETINGS WITH THE HEADS OF
THE FOUR MAJOR PARTIES (SPD, FDP, CDU, CSU) HAVE BEEN

PROPOSED BY THE FRG. WORK ON A JOINT COMMUNIQUE IS ALREADY UNDERWAY, ACCORDING TO THE AMBASSADOR, BUT NO TEXT HAS BEEN PRODUCED YET. AS FOR THE BERLIN CLAUSES IN THE THREE TREATIES, THE MATTER IS STILL AT AN IMPASSE.

2. MEANWHILE, THE SOVIET PRESS HAS DRAMATICALLY CHANGED ITS COVERAGE OF THE FRG SINCE THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE VISIT. GONE ARE THE CRITICAL ARTICLES ON ALL ASPECTS OF FRG LIFE AND SOCIETY. COVERAGE HAS DROPPED FROM EXTENSIVE TO SLIGHT, AND ALL BUT ONE OF THESE FEW PIECES HAVE BEEN NEUTRAL OR FAVORABLE. THE EXCEPTION WAS THE REPORT ON APRIL 12 IN PRAVDA OF THE VISIT OF THE PRC MINISTER OF TRADE TO BONN FOR WHAT WAS "NOT SO MUCH FOREIGN TRADE, AS MILITARY OBJECTIVES." THE TASS ARTICLE TOOK PARTICULAR NOTE OF THE VISIT OF MINISTER LI CH'ANG TO A MESSERSCHMITT PLANT WHICH, IT CLAIMS, PRODUCES BO-105 HELICOPTERS EQUIPPED WITH ANTI-TANK ARMAMENTS SUCH AS THE "MILAN" ROCKET. IT ALSO REPORTS LI'S MEETING WITH "THE LEADER OF THE REACTIONARY CSU" STRAUSS AND AN INTERVIEW WITH CDU PARLIAMENTARIAN F. ZIMMERMAN IN THE WEEKLY "SPIEGEL" CLAIMING THAT ARMS SUPPLIED TO CHINA ARE IN THE INTERESTS OF THE FRG. ALL OF THIS IS DONE IN A NEGATIVE TONE BUT WITH OUT COMMENTARY.

3. ELSEWHERE IN THE NEWSPAPERS AND ON TV AND RADIO THE
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OCCASIONAL ARTICLE POINTS OUT FOR EXAMPLE THAT THE FRG IS THE LARGEST WESTERN TRADING PARTNER OF THE SOVIET UNION AND THAT POLITICAL LEADERS IN THE FRG, BRANDT IN PARTICULAR, LOOK UPON THE TRIP AS A FAVORABLE SIGN OF CONTINUED DETENTE. THE HUSAK VISIT IN PROGRESS IS GETTING MINIMAL COVERAGE, AS IS THE USUAL FOR EE LEADERS' TRIPS TO THE WEST.

4. COMMENT: THE PRE-VISIT TURNABOUT IN PRESS COVERAGE IS STANDARD, ALTHOUGH THE NUMBER AND PROMINENCE OF FAVORABLE ARTICLES IS BELOW THE NORM. THIS IS AN INDICATION THAT ALTHOUGH THE PROPAGANDA DOGS HAVE BEEN CALLED OFF, THERE IS LITTLE EFFORT YET TO PAINT A GLOWING PICTURE OF THE FRG OR OF SOVIET-FRG RELATIONS. SHOULD THIS CONTINUE UP TO THE TIME OF THE VISIT, IT WOULD PRESAGE A CORRECT, BUT NOT WARM, VISIT. HOWEVER, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT IN THE LAST DAYS BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF BREZHNEV IN BONN THAT MORE EXTENSIVE, FAVORABLE TREATMENT WILL COME.

5. THE COMMENT IN BONN 6148 ON THE TIMING OF THE VISIT STRIKES US AS SOUND, AND WE WOULD SUGGEST ONLY ONE

ADDITIONAL FACTOR WHICH MIGHT BE CONSIDERED. WE ARE STILL NOT CLEAR ON THE PRECISE SEQUENCE WHICH LED TO THE QUICK FIXING OF THE EARLY MAY DATE, BUT WE WONDER IF THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE NATO CONSULTATIONS ON THE ERW WHICH CAME JUST BEFORE THE VISIT . ANNOUNCEMENT MAY NOT INDICATE THAT THE SOVIETS, REALIZING THAT NO EARLY DECISION ON THE ISSUE IN NATO WOULD BE POSSIBLE, CHOSE TO SELECT THE FIRST "WINDOW" FOR THE LONG-POSTPONED TRIP. THERE ARE TWO ADVANTAGES IN THIS SITUATION FOR THE SOVIETS. FIRST, A "DIALOGUE" WITH SCHMIDT -

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IS STILL POSSIBLE SINCE NO NATO DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN. SECONDLY, WITH SUCH A DECISION POSTPONED FOR LONG ENOUGH, BREZHNEV WOULD NOT HAVE TO RISK A NATO OR FRG DECISION ON ERW BEING ANNOUNCED SHORTLY AFTER HIS DEPARTURE FROM BONN -- THUS CERTIFYING A FAILURE IN BREZHNEVIAN DIPLOMACY. TOON

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